CCL-EAR COMMITTEE REVIEW
JSTOR databases
March 2016

Several CCL-EAR committee members reviewed JSTOR databases in spring 2016. Originally created as an archival journal database by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 1995, JSTOR databases now include current issues of journals, primary sources and ebooks. As the majority of California Community College Libraries subscribe to the archived journal collections, the review team decided to focus the review on the journal collections and exclude the JSTOR ebook collection.

Titles selected in JSTOR databases are based on recommendations from experts in the field, citation analysis, high-subscription base by institutions, and the length of time a journal has been published. JSTOR databases provide full-text access to over 500 academic journals and are divided into the following 21 collections:

Multidisciplinary Collections
> Arts & Science Collections I-XIV

Discipline Collections
> Business Collection
> Ecology & Botany Collection
> Health & General Science Collection
> Language & Literature Collection
> Life Sciences
> Mathematics & Statistics Collection
> Music Collection

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION for COMMUNITY COLLEGES:
#1 --- Not recommended
#2 --- Recommended with reservations as noted
#3 --- Recommended
#4 --- Outstanding offer

RATINGS for SPECIFIC ASPECTS of the DATABASE:
The following features were examined and rated on a four point scale (1=Poor; 2= Needs Improvement; 3=Good; 4=Excellent):

- **DATABASE CONTENT/FORMAT: 4**
  The content in JSTOR is focused on social sciences and humanities. Coverage includes education, business, economics, literature, history, religion, music, anthropology, law, politics, language, and world affairs. They also have content in biology, ecology, and health sciences.

JSTOR offers 21 collections, including 14 Arts & Science collections and 7 smaller collections focused on specific disciplines. There is no overlap among the Arts & Sciences collections. There is, however, some overlap between the discipline collections and the Arts & Sciences collections. When a library subscribes to collections that overlap, JSTOR will reduce the subscription fees accordingly.
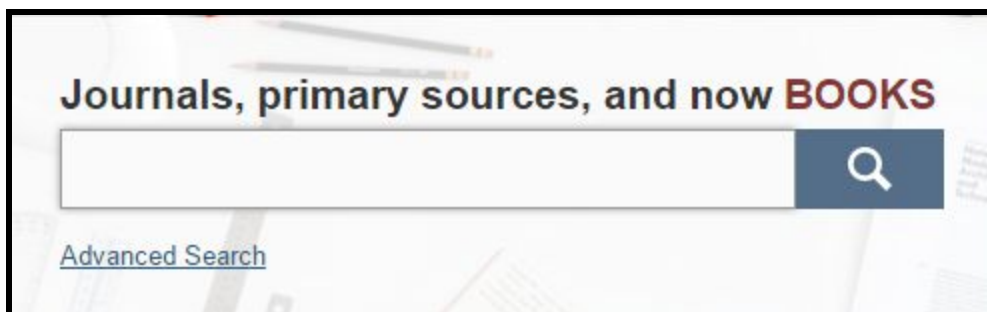
All of the content in JSTOR is full-text and articles are available to download in pdf. Coverage begins with the first issue of each journal. In the Archived Collection, containing over 2,200 titles, all embargoed titles are available after a "moving wall" of usually 3 years, though the moving wall can be anywhere from 1 to 5 years. Content in the Archived Collection accumulates and older content is never removed, so the collections continue to grow.

Added titles are announced twice a year and the announcements clearly state the duration of the moving wall for each newly added title. To find out what titles are included in your institution's subscription, go to http://www.jstor.org/kbart/holdings/my-journal-titles. You can download a KBART compliant title list. To find out what content is available because it it old enough to fall outside of copyright, visit http://about.jstor/org/service/early-journal-content-0.

- **SEARCH INTERFACE: 2.5**

  JSTOR has a clean **Basic Search** box where one can use quotation marks for exact phrases, Boolean operators for better search and using field codes for title and author search. A link to Advanced Search, located below the search box is very visible. The **Advanced Search** allows one to target a search within the document such as full-text, author, title, abstract and caption (i.e. illustration caption). On the other hand, it doesn't allow for subject searches. Spellcheck is not available in either Basic or Advanced Search.

  Basic Search:

Advanced Search:

The default setting in Advanced Search is to include only content that is subscribed by a researcher's library. If a researcher would like to read articles he doesn't have access to, he can choose to read the article online for free by signing up for a MyJSTOR account. There is no charge for registering for a MyJSTOR account. However, that account only allows a researcher to read up to 3 articles online at a time, and access to those three articles is only valid for 14 days. MyJSTOR account provides limited access to JSTOR for any individual and is not to be confused with access to JSTOR through a library subscription.

A researcher can narrow results by item type, publication date, language, publication title, and ISBN. Unique to this database is the ability to limit searches by discipline and/or journal. Also helpful is the browsing feature of JSTOR by title or publisher. On the Search results list are tabs to filter results to a specific type of content (journals, books and pamphlets).
Limit searches by discipline and/or journal:

JOURNAL FILTER
NARROW BY DISCIPLINE AND/OR JOURNAL:

> ☐ African American Studies (25 titles)

> ☐ African Studies (75 titles)

> ☐ American Indian Studies (10 titles)

> ☐ American Studies (135 titles)

> ☐ Anthropology (127 titles)

> ☐ Aquatic Sciences (19 titles)

> ☐ Archaeology (149 titles)

> ☐ Architecture & Architectural History (49 titles)

> ☐ Area Studies (692 titles)

> ☐ Art & Art History (252 titles)

APA, MLA and Chicago citation formats are available. However, the citation formats are not accurate. For example, capitalization in the title of the article is incorrect in APA citation, publication year is cited in the wrong place in Chicago citation, and the title of the database and the date of access are not cited in MLA citation.

Articles and book chapters can be downloaded and those can be printed, emailed and shared through social media.

- **USER SUPPORT SERVICES: 3**

  Detailed, well-written documentation for using JSTOR, both for end users and administrative users, is available on the JSTOR site. This includes several FAQs grouped by theme such as access issues as well as downloadable presentations and posters in Power Point and Adobe Acrobat formats. JSTOR also offers training webinars free of charge on a regular basis, though registration is required.

  JSTOR offers several mechanisms for technical support. There is a Help link in the upper right of the database interface for easy access to the support page on the JSTOR organization site. A form for reporting issues via email is available on the support page as well as access to reporting via Twitter and phone contact information. However, phone support is limited to Monday-Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm EST. A Quick Tips section appears on the support page for answers to common technical support issues. The search

interface on the organizational site is an easy way to access information about technical support issues. However, just like the database, it does not have a spellcheck. Subscribers are notified of database changes and updates via email, or they can follow via Twitter, Tumblr or Facebook. Users can also sign up for e-news alerts.

- **COST: 3**

  JSTOR is available to the community colleges for the following rates:

  Every institution pays two fees to participate in JSTOR, a one-time only Archive Capital Fee (ACF) of $1,000 and an Annual Access Fee (AAF) for each collection. These fees vary depending upon the size and classification of each institution.

  Recognizing that little archiving is done in community college libraries, JSTOR has reduced the Archive Capital Fee (ACF) and requires that the $1,000 fee be paid only once, upon licensing the first collection. The ACF fee will be waived with the licensing of subsequent collections. Libraries may subscribe to any combination of collections. Additionally, libraries can participate in a "one-and-done" purchase model with one time money.

  For further information regarding participating in JSTOR, please see JSTOR website at http://about.jstor.org/chart-description/community-colleges

- **AVAILABILITY/ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICE: 3**

  JSTOR is compatible with Windows and Mac OSX and major web browsers (Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox, Safari). However, browsers must be enabled to accept cookies for successful use of JSTOR. Responsive design has been recently incorporated to improve user experience on mobile devices.

  JSTOR details its commitment to section 508 compliance as well as its adherence to W3C WAI WCAG 2.0 Level A guidelines on the Accessibility page of its site. Users who require a higher level of tagging of .pdf format articles can also request manual tagging of up to three articles per request with a turnaround time of three days.

CONCLUSION: 3

JSTOR databases provide full-text access to high quality academic content. However, being an archival database means that much of the content is not current. It is common to have a 3-5 year embargo on a title in the archival journal collection. In the social sciences and humanities, which is the focus of JSTOR databases content, such embargo may not be an issue.

While there have been improvements to JSTOR interface, it is still not as intuitive as other databases. For instance, the lack of spellcheck and indexing (i.e. Subject search) are an issue.

All in all, weighing the cost, content and interface of JSTOR databases, the review team feels that the content supports assignments common in higher level community college courses.

OTHER REVIEWS OF THIS PRODUCT

Kern, Verletta. "JSTOR Music Collection." *Notes* 68.2 (2011): 425-428. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.

LaGuardia, Cheryl. "JSTOR." *Library Journal* 1 Nov. 2012: 92-93. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.

"Library Bloggers vs. JSTOR." *Library Journal* 15 Sept. 2010: 16. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.